

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Bristol Legislative Delegation: City Selected as Pilot Test Site for New Medicare Program**



Bristol has been selected by the federal Social Security Administration as a national pilot test site for the application form for a new program that will provide subsidies to low-income Medicare beneficiaries to help them cover the cost of annual premiums, deductibles and co-payments associated with the new Medicare Part D prescription drug program, Bristol's legislative delegation announced today.

The new Medicare Prescription Drug program (Medicare Part D) will take effect January 1, 2006. The new program will provide optional prescription drug coverage to Medicare beneficiaries by offering a choice of prescription drug plans with various types of coverage, said state representatives William A. Hamzy, R-78<sup>th</sup> District, Konstantinos Diamantis, D-79<sup>th</sup> District, Roger B. Michele, D-77<sup>th</sup> District, and state Senator Thomas A. Colapietro, D-31<sup>st</sup> District.

Since the benefit is available to all Medicare beneficiaries, it is expected to affect a significant number of current ConnPACE and Medicaid beneficiaries who may qualify for extra help (the Medicare Part D Low Income Subsidy) to pay the annual premiums, deductibles and co-payments associated with the new Medicare Part D benefit, the legislators said.

The Social Security Administration, which is responsible for enrolling Medicare beneficiaries into Part D, has set a goal of enrolling 90 percent of the estimated number of Medicare beneficiaries eligible for the Part D low-income subsidies (LIS) by December 2005. The SSA launched its pilot program for the new LIS application form in 45 randomly selected zip codes throughout the United States late last month. Fifty randomly selected beneficiaries in Bristol, which was selected as one of the test sites by the SSA, were to be mailed the Medicare Part D LIS application forms in late March, the legislators said.

"If you are one of the 50 Bristol residents who received a Medicare Part D LIS form recently, we urge you to fill it out and return it as soon as possible. Although filling out the form does not enroll you in the Medicare prescription drug plan, it will provide the Social Security Administration with information it needs to determine whether you qualify for extra help in paying for your prescription drugs," the legislators said.

“After the SSA receives and reviews your completed application form, it will send you a letter telling you if you qualify for the subsidy. SSA also will provide you with information about the prescription drug program and the next steps you should take. Returning the application form on a timely basis will enable a quicker decision to be made on whether you qualify for the extra help,” the legislators said.

Residents who need help filling out the form should call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). More help as well as an online application can be found at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), the legislators said.

For more information about the new Medicare Prescription Drug program, call 1-800-MEDICARE (TTY 1-877-486-2048) or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), the legislators said.